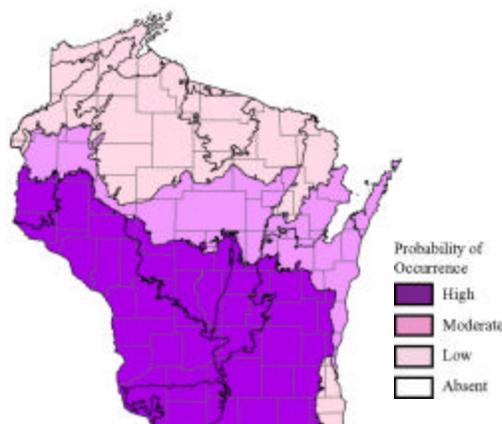


## Western Meadowlark (*Sturnella neglecta*)

### Species Assessment Scores\*

State rarity:	3
State threats:	4
State population trend:	5
Global abundance:	2
Global distribution:	2
Global threats:	3
Global population trend:	4
Mean Risk Score:	3.3
Area of importance:	2

\* Please see the [Description of Vertebrate Species Summaries \(Section 3.1.1\)](#) for definitions of criteria and scores.



### Ecological Landscape Associations

Please note that this is not a range map. Shading does not imply that the species is present throughout the Landscape, but represents the probability that the species occurs somewhere in the Landscape.

### Landscape -community Combinations of Highest Ecological Priority

Ecological Landscape	Community
Central Sand Hills	Surrogate grasslands
Central Sand Plains	Dry -mesic prairie
Central Sand Plains	Oak barrens
Central Sand Plains	Sand prairie
Central Sand Plains	Surrogate grasslands
Southeast Glacial Plains	Dry prairie
Southeast Glacial Plains	Dry -mesic prairie
Southeast Glacial Plains	Surrogate grasslands
Southwest Savanna	Dry prairie
Southwest Savanna	Dry -mesic prairie
Southwest Savanna	Surrogate grasslands
Western Coulee and Ridges	Dry prairie
Western Coulee and Ridges	Dry -mesic prairie
Western Coulee and Ridges	Oak barrens
Western Coulee and Ridges	Sand prairie
Western Coulee and Ridges	Surrogate grasslands
Western Prairie	Dry -mesic prairie
Western Prairie	Surrogate grasslands

### Threats and Issues

- Succession of grassland habitats to shrubland and woodland, due to lack of fire or other management to suppress woody growth is a threat.
- Intensification of agriculture, including early and frequent harvest of hay and conversion of idle grassland (including pasture) to row crops or tree plantations.
- Loss of grassland habitat due to development.
- Disturbance of grassland nesting cover during the breeding season.

- This species benefits from light to moderate grazing of grasslands, but overgrazing is a threat.
- Aggressive invasive forbs, including yellow parsnip, crown vetch, leafy spurge, thistles, reed canary grass, and some goldenrods can degrade habitat quality of grasslands for this species.
- Agricultural pesticides may pose a threat in certain cases on winter, migration, and breeding grounds.

**Priority Conservation Actions**

- Continue agricultural set-aside programs, especially those that allow for permanent protection of habitats. Prevent tree planting in important grassland areas.
- Work with planning and zoning authorities to protect valuable open grassland landscapes from being converted to urban or suburban development.
- Create incentives for delaying hay harvest until after the primary breeding season.
- Partnerships are key for conserving this species in working agricultural landscapes.
- Promote light to moderate grazing of grasslands on public and privately managed areas.